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USSR 1949 Achievements in the Petroleum Industry

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USSR 1946 ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE PETROLEUM INDUSTRY

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The petroleum-extraction industry of the USSR achieved great success in 1946 with an increase of 12 percent. The achievements of many oil fields in the eastern regions were particularly great, exceeding 1945 for petroleum extraction 25.8 percent.

Drilling operations are being expanded at a high rate of speed. During 1946 the volume of drilling has increased for both ministries of the petroleum industry.

The plan for the first year of the Five-Year Plan for petroleum extraction was fulfilled both by the eastern regions and the western and southern regions. Only petroleum extraction in the southern regions, particularly in Baku, is as yet being restored at a very slow rate. 1946 represented only a small gain over 1945.

By the end of 1944 petroleum machine building was almost completely restored in Baku plants.

From 1946 on, petroleum extraction in Baku began to increase gradually. Geological and surveying operations increased as well as drilling operations. Turbo-drilling was resumed. The technical condition of oil wells was improved. The number of active wells was stepped up and the inactive reserves were reduced.

Exploratory drilling represented only 20 percent of all drilling in the Baku area in prewar years. Practice has indicated that this is a very low figure for Azerbaydzhan. It should be considerably more. The plan for exploratory drilling was fulfilled by Azneft' 63 percent in 1945, 67.4 percent in 1946, with the completion of the plan for exploitative drilling 116 percent in 1945 and 139.7 percent in 1946. In the fourth quarter of 1946 exploratory drilling not only did not increase over the fourth quarter of 1945 but even decreased 9 percent, in spite of the fact that the number of drilling machines for exploratory drilling had increased by the end of 1946 by 38 percent.

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The drilling rate norms per machine-month in exploratory drilling were completed only on an average of 73.5 percent in 1946 and the rate decreased on an average of 26.5 meters per machine-month in 1946 in comparison with 1945.

In 1946 Groznyy petroleum workers drilled exploratory wells at a rate 82 percent higher than in Baku, although before the war the Baku rate of drilling exceeded that of Groznyy.

The petroleum workers making a bad showing must profit by the achievements of outstanding workers. For example, drillers of the Buzovnyneft' Trust of the 'zneft' Association are regularly exceeding the plan for drilling. In spite of the fact that they drill deep wells here - exceeding 2,000 meters - they have achieved a rate of 850 meters per machine-month in drilling exploratory wells, by sharply cutting down on idle periods and by excellent work organization. Leninneft' Trust drillers are drilling exploratory wells at a rate of 500 meters per machine-month. Kirovneft' Trust drillers are achieving over 400 meters per machine-month. However, for the Azneft' Association as a whole, the rate of exploratory drilling in 1946 was only 184 meters per machine-month because of the long idle periods and slow rate of drilling in the Kaganovichneft', Azizbekovneft', and Molotovneft' trusts.

The slow development of the petroleum extraction industry of Baku is explained by the fact that the gusher method of extraction which accounted for about one fourth of all prewar extraction in Baku is based entirely on utilizing natural pressure of the petroleum deposit and pressure is not maintained by forcing gas or water into the deposit. This leads to a speedy drop in the deposit pressure, a shortening of the gusher period of the well and a sharp decrease in output. Secondary methods of exploitation are not being utilized and, as a result, more than half the petroleum reserves remain in deposits being worked and the output of thousands of wells is prematurely decreased.

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In 1935 petroleum from wells drilled and put into operation during that year amounted to 5.6 million tons in Baku. In addition to this, 1.1 million tons were extracted the same year by putting inactive wells into operation. But, in spite of this, the total level of petroleum extraction was only 158,000 tons higher in 1935 than in 1934.

In 1939, 4.4 million tons of petroleum were extracted from new and restored wells but the level of petroleum extraction in Baku not only did not increase but even decreased 558,000 tons. In 1940 the total increase in petroleum extraction in Baku amounted to 628,000 tons in spite of the fact that 4.6 million tons were extracted from new and restored wells.

During the first three five-year plans an increase in the Baku petroleum output was assured by the opening up and putting into operation of new, very large and highly productive deposits. Thus the Baku petroleum output rose 3.1 million tons in 1933 and 3.8 million tons in 1934, as a result of opening up the very rich deposits of Kala and Lokbatan. During the last 6 pre-war years (1935-1940) Baku petroleum extraction rose a total of 3 million tons or an average of .5 million tons per year. Almost three times as much petroleum was extracted in Baku in 1940 as in 1913.

Technical reconstruction was carried out in the Baku petroleum industry sooner than in other branches of the USSR industry. Baku is the birthplace of the Soviet petroleum geological science. Here drills for deep rotary drilling were designed and put into use. Bits and other tools and instruments were perfected here.

At the beginning of the new Five-Year Plan the Azerbaydzhan petroleum-extraction industry seemed less ready for a quick increase in petroleum output than the petroleum-extraction industry of the eastern regions in spite of the rich deposits of the Ansheron Peninsula, at the bottom of the Caspian Sea and in the new petroleum regions of Neftechala and Kirovabad. Exploratory operations in 1946 confirmed the presence of large, little investigated petroleum deposits in the Baku petroleum region. At the same time, thanks to the great success in petroleum prospecting in the Urals, the Volga area, and other eastern regions and the tremendous amounts of petroleum discovered there, the Five-Year Plan raised the proportion of the eastern regions in the total USSR petroleum output from 12 percent in 1940 to 36 percent in 1950.

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By the end of the Five-Year Plan the volume of drilling is to increase to twice what it was in 1940 and exploratory drilling is to amount to three times as much as it was in 1940.

If Azneft' shortens the period for restoring the petroleum output to the prewar level by one-two years, that will permit the petroleum industry USSR to exceed the prewar level in 1950 not by 14 percent but in considerably greater proportions and will assure a more favorable relation between the development of the petroleum industry and other very important branches of the national economy.

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